

## **RECRUITING ADULT LEADERS: 5 STEP PLAN**

Your pack will live or die based, in part, on how well you can recruit and use adult volunteers: A "one man show" pack will never thrive like a pack run by a solid team of people committed to putting on a great program for the boys.

If you have problems recruiting, try this outline-it really works, but it is not 100% effective. Improve your chances by doing your homework and asking a lot of people for a little help!

### **1.) Plan**

*What help do you really need?*

Sit down and look at your pack. Using the Cub Scout Leader Book's structure as a loose guide, figure out what positions you really need filled.

*Prioritize:*

What positions do you need most desperately? If you need both den leaders and a Friends of Scouting chair, focus on the den leaders.

*Pin-point:*

When making your plans, try to determine what each position's duties and responsibilities would be, including a fair estimate of the time commitment involved.

*Pre-select:*

Who would you select to fill each position? Use the talent and interest survey sheets and the opinions of other leaders to figure out who you think would do a good job in each position based on skills, interests and talents.

### **2.) Present**

*Make your sales pitch!*

This can be done before the entire group, to a few people in an informal setting, or on a one-on-one basis, but the idea is to tell everyone what your needs are. Handouts and visual aids will help a lot!

One great aid is a large organizational chart where you can fill in the spaces as people volunteer. Display this chart every chance to both recognize the volunteers and remind people subtly about the roles still open.

Do not fall into the temptation to either use threats ("If we do not get a volunteer for this role, we will not be able to have a Pinewood Derby this year.") or sugar-coat the job ("It'll only take an hour a week! "). Be factual, honest and to-the-point.

Tell people about the benefits to being a volunteer. For example:

- Research has shown that one key to contentment is to be a part of something worthwhile that is larger than yourself or your family.
- The boys of volunteers generally go farther, faster and for longer than other boys.
- Packs with larger degrees of adult commitment thrive longer than packs without it, and the boys do better in the pack.
- As a volunteer, you have a voice in the pack and our activities and can be a real force for improvement!

Also, do not bother asking for volunteers in a large group setting- the people who would

volunteer in this situation have probably already done so! When you are done, let everyone know that if they are interested, they should see you or another leader.

### **3.) Propose**

*NOW you ask them!*

Remember your 'pre-selection' list? Now that that person has been responsibly informed, either in a group setting or individually, you ask them if they can help face to face, one on one.

Be sure to tell them why you are asking them to fill this job- people are flattered and appreciative that they are being recruited because of their skills and talents.

Be prepared for being turned down- most of us said 'no' the first time. Listen to their concerns and address them honestly. Reassure them that there is support for them in the form of training and the other leaders.

Two big sticking points are often time and money. What will this cost them, and how can the pack help reduce this? Be ready to answer this.

Finally, be ready for the big question- it may not get asked out loud, so listen carefully for it-"What 's in it for me?" Warm fuzzy feelings are adequate rewards for some people, others want more. What do you get out of Scouting? The camaraderie of other leaders, recognition of your peers, a sense of belonging to something big and worthwhile?

### **4.) Percolate**

*Let 'em think about it a while!*

Most people want to think about it for a bit. Even if they gave you a 'yes', they will think about it and might change their minds.

This is a critical time- this is the time the victim (er, I mean, volunteer!) makes the real commitment.- either for or against doing it. Use this time.

**First-** Limit it. Let them know that you will be back in touch in a couple days. If possible, make an appointment to discuss it further.

**Second-** Leave them with information, such as handouts, a copy of the Cub Scout Leader Book or the Cub Leader How-To Book. Make sure they have phone numbers in case they have questions.

**Third-** Stay in touch. A phone call or visit during the time helps demonstrate your interest- as long as it is not perceived as being pushy. Do not ask for a decision at this time- rather remind them of the meeting and see if they have any questions for you.

At the meeting, bring an application, current training schedule, current council/district newsletter, etc. If they say 'yes', you want to be ready to get them involved immediately.

### **5.) Persevere**

*"Service after the sale!"*

Getting the initial 'yes' is the climax of our little drama, but not the end. Now comes the time you set the tone of their service.

As they sign up, they will be nervous- especially if they are a den leader or if they have an immediate job. Ease their fears as soon as possible. Find them a 'mentor"- a person to act as a combination babysitter, aide, trainer, parent figure, secretary and 'boss'.

Get them to Youth Protection and On-line training as quickly as possible. This training is designed to help allay these fears and prepare them for the job. If you are not sure about this, contact a trainer in your district for help.

Get them to in-person Cub Scout Leader Basic as soon as you can. Bring them to

Roundtable and introduce them around.

The goal here is to show them the wonderful people and support available!

Help them get a complete uniform if needed for their role, and any books or resources that will help. Be with them in their first few meetings, providing a safety net and a friendly face.

Last, but not finally- thank them! In person, verbally, then later with a short note. Be sure to provide all possible recognition- any awards they may earn. Never let the thanks and recognition fade away!

## **Final Thoughts •••**

*Who do we recruit?*

Think about your pool of volunteers. Who does it include? The parents of Scouts? Certainly, but how about...

- Parents or leaders from the past, especially those whose children have entered Boy Scouts but they did not follow for whatever reason, or who may have time now that their children are grown.
- Grandparents, older siblings, or other relatives of the Cub Scouts in the pack.
- Adults in the Chartering Organization, church or school. Often, there are people here who support you and might be willing to help!
- Neighbors or co-workers. A lot of people are interested in Scouting and would help if invited, even though they do not have children.
- Kindergarten parents who might become Tiger Partners next year.
- Adults who were Scouts and might be interested in getting involved again.
- Unions, professional organizations, service clubs, etc. often help youth groups by advertising their needs for help. In many places, police officers and firefighters often volunteer to help a local pack.

*Whose job is recruiting?*

Technically, it may be the Chartering Organization's responsibility to ensure that a pack is functionally staffed. In reality, however, it is your job, no matter who you are.

There may be a person on the committee who has this as part of their duties (usually the Cubmaster or Committee Chair), but it is up to all of us to do our part. You probably know someone who would be an excellent addition to your pack. Why not ask them this week?

Remember: Recruiting may not be fun, but being a part of a smoothly operating pack filled with happy Scouts is!

## **CUB SCOUTING WITH THE "MADISON PLAN"**

Cub Scouting with the "Madison Plan" is a way for you and your Pack to organize the Scouting year and a way to get maximum participation from all of the parents in the Pack. In order for the plan to work, the leadership of the pack must change their mindset. What the mindset must be is:

\*every parent of every Scout is willing to do something to help the program, they just do not know what!

\* In addition, the attitude of the Pack leadership must be that

\*every parent will sign up to help with an activity, or they will be assigned one.

*Here is the "Madison Plan" and how it works:*

**Step 1.** Make sure you have a working unit committee. (Recruit, recruit, recruit!!)

**Step 2.** List all of the annual activities of the unit, i.e., Join Scouting night, Pinewood, Popcorn sales, etc.

**Step 3.** Write up a job description for each of these events. Include details such as "complete by" dates and tasks to be accomplished.

**Step 4.** Assign parents to the activities. The ideal is to have three parents on each committee. There should be one parent from the Webelos den(s), one from the Bear den(s) and one from the Wolf den(s). Parents stay on the same committee for three years. If they wish to switch committees, they must make arrangements with another parent from another committee to replace them and report the change to the Pack. The Pack committee should not switch the committees around. Tiger families are invited to observe and learn if they wish.

**Step 5.** Create folders for the various activities that explain the duties of the committee and what has taken place in previous years. The folders are to be used as guidelines and can be changed and improved at the committees' discretion. We find it is easy to get parents involved when they know that some record has been kept on each activity. It also serves as some source history for the Pack.

**Step 6.** Have the "Chairperson" of the Activity (usually the Webelos parent, because they have 2 years experience in the activity) attend the Pack Committee meeting \*at least\* two months before the event, to get the folder and instructions? Then, one of the committee member needs to attend the following months Pack Committee meetings to report on progress and/or get advice and help with resources.

**Step 7.** Be sure that the committee add their respective plans, results, and recommendations to the folder and reports to the Pack committee meeting the month after the event.

\*Remember, parents always want to do something, they just do not know what.

\* This plan is a good way to get them involved. It is a good idea to use the Parent and Family Talent Survey Sheets to make assignments.

Some parents do not want to be assigned, so some packs pass around a form in April and May and the parents sign up for the activity they want to do.

\*This plan is best if planned at the Annual Program Planning Conference and printed in a form that all parent receive a copy of at the September Pack Meeting or Join Scouting Night

## ATTRACTING & RETAINING ADULT LEADERS

### A) Volunteers Make it work...

- BSA is mostly a volunteer effort
- Most everyone wants to leave a legacy
- People really want to help
- Very few people just don't care
- Most everyone wants to make a difference

### B) Leaders put in not only expertise, but passion as well

#### 1) *Caring is the reason for volunteering* -

- Novices built the ark, Experts built the Titanic - Believe in what you do
- Caring won't replace knowledge, but they can "learn as they go"
- Caring brings a thirst for knowledge and a zeal to do it right

#### 2) *Important for the health of ANY volunteer organization to have plenty of volunteers*

- Many volunteers make work light
- Find YOUR replacement early (continued success)
- DO NOT refuse a volunteer's time or contribution
- There IS something they can do
- Exercise discretion in where you put people
- Unless (of course) excluded by Council or Unit Charter Organization

### Several points to getting a person to volunteer

#### A) Demonstrate the need

- All boys deserve a trained leader
- More leaders increase quality AND quantity of program

#### B) Match abilities & interests

- Takes time
- Need to understand a person's motivations

#### C) Cultivate a relationship

- Some positions require time to fill
- Give small responsibilities FIRST... increase gradually
- Need to be a person's friend as much as possible

#### D) Ask them personally and specifically

- Avoid doing it publicly
- Show them how THEY can make a difference in that position
- Show them that they can do it

#### E) Support them through their decision

- Make sure they know YOU will support them
- Never pressure them; let it be their decision!

#### F) Follow up on their decision

- Thank them
- Verbally
- With badge of office (if appropriate)

#### G) Give them materials for the job

- Books or handouts
- Lists of resources

- H) Never judge or second-guess a person's decision  
Don't take the first "no" either...  
Leave room for them to serve elsewhere if they say "no"

Several points to retaining a volunteer

- A) GET THEM TO TRAINING!!!  
This will "formalize" their new position  
Give them the added knowledge of what the position entails  
Prepare them to succeed
- B) Follow up on their new "job"  
Frequently at first  
Help them through the tough times
- C) MAKE SURE THEY ARE HAVING FUN... No fun=No Leaders too!
- D) Help them to recruit additional help as needed
- E) Thank them and praise them publicly and often  
Make an "example" out of them  
Adult recognition  
Inductions  
Fun awards  
Knots
- F) Thank them privately even more often  
POINT out the difference that they make.  
Remind them to find & train a replacement  
Catch them doing something "right"  
Ignore them and they WILL go away...
- G) Let them do it THEIR way whenever possible  
Allow for creative problem solving  
Give them ownership of the position & problems  
Use the G2SS as your guide
- H) GET THEM TO MORE TRAINING!!!  
Helps them to see the bigger picture  
Roundtables  
University of Scouting  
Scoutmaster Fundamentals or Outdoor Leader Training  
Baloo

"Fla-Bob" Pete Murray (The Florida Bobwhite)  
Council & District Boy Scout Roundtable Commissioner